



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4302

March 6, 2015

Mr. Dick Costolo
Chief Executive Officer, Twitter
1355 Market Street Suite 900
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Mr. Costolo,

We are concerned that designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs) and their supporters actively use Twitter to disseminate propaganda, drive fundraising, and recruit new members—even posting graphic content depicting the murder of individuals they have captured.

We applaud your removal of some terrorist content, which has provoked serious threats against Twitter and its employees. However, we urge Twitter to treat all terrorist activity in the same way it treats other objectionable content. Users should have the option to report terrorist content in a streamlined manner, allowing Twitter to quickly block content and accounts that support terrorism, and Twitter should have a dedicated team to review such reports in a timely fashion. As you know, there is precedent in the social media industry for such a response.

As Members of Congress, we are strong advocates for the right to free speech as protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution. We commend Twitter's strong commitment to promoting free speech in the United States and around the world. However, when Twitter accounts are used to support terrorism, such content does not deserve protection.

It is our hope that this voluntary action will help prevent violent extremists from using social media and the Internet to advance their hateful ideology.

Sincerely,

Ted Poe
Chairman, Terrorism Subcommittee

Brad Sherman
Ranking Member, Asia Subcommittee

Ed Royce
Chairman, House Foreign Affairs Committee

Eliot Engel
Ranking Member, House Foreign Affairs Committee